

# Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Iron men changing hearts in Tishomingo

By Tony Martin  
Associate Editor

Proverbs 27:17 states: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." In Tishomingo Church in Tishomingo County, a group of men have taken this verse to heart — literally.

Royce Howie, men's ministry coordinator at Tishomingo Church, said, "In February of 1999 I'd found myself badly overweight, out of shape, and would become out of breath just putting on my clothes or tying my shoes." Bobby Cobb, missions director for Tishomingo Association, invited Howie to begin working out

ing my body as a living sacrifice. I sure hadn't been doing that!"

These men began inviting other men to join them for exercise, primarily weight lifting, fellowship, and prayer. The group grew to 15 or so men meeting three times weekly.

The group now meets in a storage building behind the offices of the Tishomingo Association. Several men have donated exercise equipment.

A typical evening begins with the men breaking up into groups of three. Each group cycles through the exercise equipment, working a different set of muscles each night. A great deal of good-natured ribbing goes on, but no one is made fun of because of his lack of ability.

"We encourage the men to lift as much as they want, based on health, ability, and experience," said Howie. "During the summer we have several young men come, and the adults help them along."

One young man, Josh Stanphill, said, "I come because it's fun and I love Jesus. I thank my dad and Brother Jim for making this possible."

Lives have been changed in this ministry. According to Howie,

"We've seen men lose ten to 35 pounds and many inches. There have been several men who have worked out years of sore, slow muscles in our workouts. The physical conditioning is not the number one benefit. The spiritual benefits are even more profound than the physical. After each workout we have a prayer and share time. Many tears have been shed, our burdens shared and lifted."

One man present said, "I'd had a heart attack. I didn't think anyone loved me except, maybe, my wife and kids. I know different now."

"We've seen men in their sixties who have never prayed aloud pray in this group. Same for sharing testimonies," said Cobb.



**HEAVY LIFTING** — Jim Pinkerton, pastor of Tishomingo Church, tackles a heavily-weighted barbell as a part of his three-times-a-week workout in his church's Iron Man Ministry. (Photo by Tony Martin)



**PUMPING IRON** — Bobby Cobb, missions director for Tishomingo Association, takes on the challenge of staying physically and spiritually fit in Tishomingo Church's Iron Man Ministry. The ministry began in the carport of Cobb's home. (Photo by Tony Martin)

### WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Directions

Just for the Record

Letters to the editor

Sunday School lessons

A young father who was going through a difficult divorce said that if it hadn't been for the influence of this ministry, he would have killed himself. He had gone as far as to put a gun to his head.

Pinkerton was delighted with what the ministry had accomplished. "I know of at least two men who prayed to receive Christ right here on the spot. There have been men

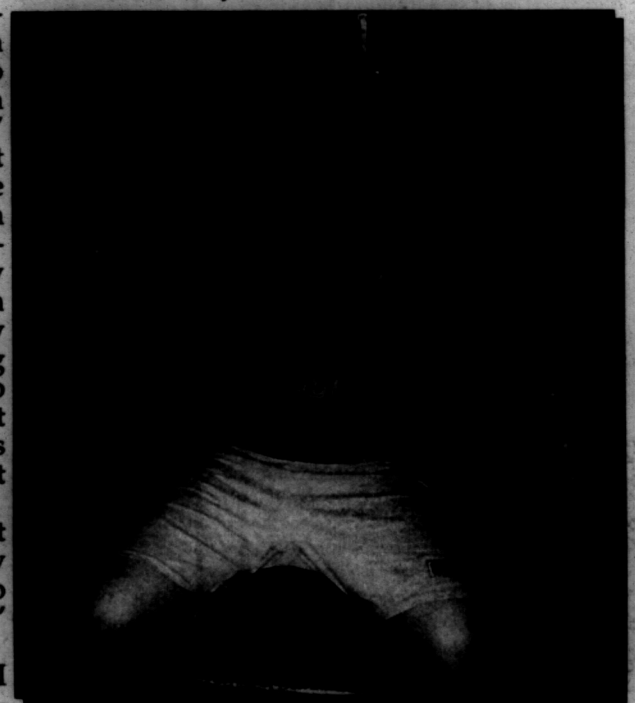
who were looking for a church home come to our church because of this," he said. "It might have begun as an exercise ministry, but now it's more of a prayer ministry than anything else. I had no idea that it would reach as many men as it has."

"We don't let anyone in if they don't plan to stay and pray," Cobb added.

"You know, if I were in a wheelchair or on crutches, I'd still come," said Howie, wiping

sweat from his forehead. "That how important this prayer time is to me. No matter what is happening, I know that there will be 12 to 14 men praying for me."

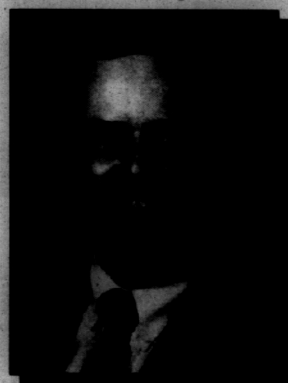
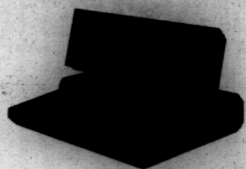
Howie took a long look around the building after the men had prayed and were heading home. "You don't need a big expensive building to do this," he said. "Just a desire to be better for God and your fellow men."



**PLAYING WITH THE BIG BOYS** — Sixth grader Josh Stanphill holds his own with the other men who participate in the Iron Man Ministry of Tishomingo Church. (Photo by Tony Martin)



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# The fallacy of planning for failure

Imagine that you sign up for the newest and hottest diet program available. You really, really want to lose weight. The many efforts to discipline yourself have failed. Your self-esteem is low and your weight is high because of the mistakes you've made in the past.

You need someone to show you the way to achieve your goals. You need a support group for encouragement and accountability. You need to know you are not alone.

You're sitting at your first meeting of this new diet program, anxious to know the secrets of losing weight. You catch your breath as the instructor walks in. This is the night for which you've been waiting!

Much to your surprise, the instructor spends less than two minutes on how to lose weight and then announces, "So much for that. In case you fail — and we all know you will fail at some point — we're going to spend the rest of the evening talking about how to enjoy your failure!"

Would you not be dumbfounded? Would you not be indignant? Would you not have a thing or two to say to the instructor?

"Listen," retorts the instructor, "we all know it's better to lose weight and keep it off, but you also have to know what to do when you give in to temptation — because you will fail."

"Take it from me; you're better off knowing how to manage both sets of circumstances."

Needless to say, most of us wouldn't be back for the second meeting. Most likely, we would see to it that such a disgraceful scam was banished forever from our communities.

Yet there is just such a disgraceful scam being blissfully perpetrated in many of our communities, under the guise of childhood sex education.

"Yes, abstinence is the best and most desirable course," the proponents admit, "but we all know these children are going

to fail at some point, so we must also teach them how to enjoy their failure.

"Take it from us; they're better off knowing how to manage both sets of circumstances."

Not necessarily. The many abstinence-only programs springing up around the country give the lie to the basic concept of childhood sex education — that children must be prepared for the certainty of premarital sex.

The wildly-successful True Love Waits program, by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, is proof that abstinence-only programs can succeed.

To the argument that all evidence of such programs' successes are anecdotal, the Best Friends program in Washington, D.C., has the answer.

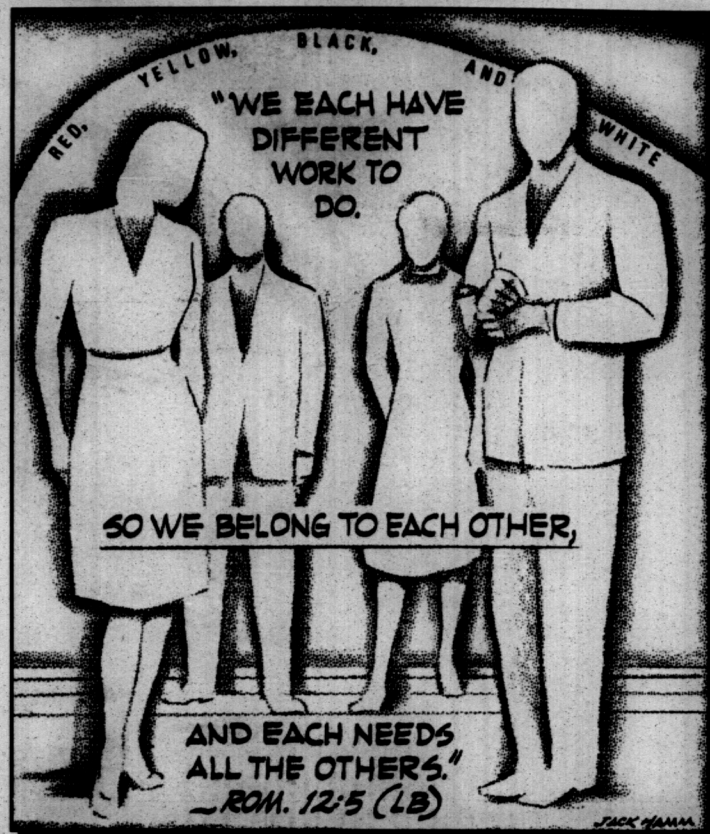
Chartered by Elayne Bennett, wife of author and former U.S. Education Secretary Bill Bennett, the Best Friends program is focused on the Washington neighborhoods

where the teen pregnancy rate is among the highest in the nation.

Best Friends teaches teenaged girls to respect themselves and plan for a bright future that includes complete abstinence from sexual activities — no excuses and no fallback plan.

The girls attend classes on topics such as "refusal skills" when approached for sex, and how to tell the difference between love and sex. They are individually mentored by successful women who volunteer to serve as role models.

They are treated to a weekly aerobics class to build self-esteem about their physical appearance. They are awarded a special T-shirt and gym bag signifying their commitment to Best Friends.



There is a mother-daughter recognition luncheon, at which diamond pins are awarded to program graduates.

The results? An independent study found that in an area where 26% of teenaged girls become pregnant each year, only four percent of the Best Friends girls were sexually active and a mere 1.1% became pregnant. Many of the Best Friends girls are now attending college.

Abstinence works, and abstinence-only programs work. It's time we got behind these programs that provide a safety net from the self-defeating, lifelong cycle of failure that begins with premarital sex.

We wouldn't settle for less in a diet program. How much more important are our young people?

## GUEST OPINION:

### Hope and healing for the hurting

By Jerry Williams, member  
Morrison Heights Church, Clinton



I began a painful journey six years ago, when I was advised of a loved one's involvement in homosexuality.

I was devastated and isolated myself from my entire family. I experienced embarrassment, rage, confusion, loss, guilt, betrayal, anger, and disappointment. My emotions haunted me constantly as I tucked them deep inside, protected by sinful pride.

The first five years were difficult and embarrassing. I kept my feelings private and talked to no one. My tears flowed frequently. Pride created a shield to cover the mayhem of my emotions.

My wife Judy, lost in her world of helplessness, searched four years for help. The search included private counseling, Exodus International on the West Coast, Love In Action in Memphis, Focus on the Family in Colorado, and back to Love in Action.

There she discovered Radical Living, a ministry which provides help for families and friends of loved ones involved in homosexuality. This biblically-based discipleship ministry provides hope and recovery for the hurting.

Sidelined by an injury, my wife couldn't attend Radical Living. That was a relief for me since I didn't want to attend. I had no desire to become involved and

talk with total strangers.

I continued to study God's word and pray for my loved one, but the prayers seemed ineffective. My wife was constantly asking me to attend Radical Living in Memphis. The answer I always gave her was, "I'm fine; I don't need any help."

How many times I told that lie, only God knows. Secretly I was crying out to God, "Do you not care? Do you not see the pain we are experiencing? Can't you see that we're hurting?"

God's answer to me was, "Yes, I see. Yes, I care."

God was waiting on me. It was my move. One morning during a quiet time, I found myself praying a prayer I had resisted for some time: "God, I need a heart change if I am to support my wife and attend Radical Living with her. My heart is cold and callous toward the homosex-

ual lifestyle and I do not have the heart of Christ in this matter."

There was a need for me to get honest with myself and others.

Finally, I had my wife contact Love In Action, who referred us to Radical Living in Louisville, Miss. As I reached out to God, the support group prayed for my wife and me and held me accountable for my feelings.

Gently they encouraged me to dig into my own life and search for the garbage which needed to be released. This was the beginning of my recovery. I had to confess the sin of pride and other sins I did not even recognize until the Holy Spirit revealed them to me.

They disciplined me with God's Word, which revealed his truth and light. Satan's lies have also been exposed and I have been liberated from his stronghold.

God changed my heart. He

changed my attitude. The Holy Spirit quietly revealed to me that Christ died for all mankind. He paid the penalty of sin for everyone, including the homosexual.

When he was nailed to the cross, there were no exception lists attached.

God has leveled the mountains and calmed the storms in my life. Today I have joy and peace. My faith has deepened beyond imagination. I depend on him alone.

Thank you, Father, for healing my broken heart and returning my joy.

God's invitation is open to all who will come to him for rest: "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus will Himself restore, establish, and strengthen you." — 1 Peter 5:10 (RSV)

Editor's note: Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will sponsor a Love in Action Conference on May 18-19. To receive a registration form or for more information, contact Jennifer Janes, Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton, MS 39056. Telephone: (601) 924-5260. Registration is limited to 50 participants. The Williamses will also begin a Radical Living support group in June.



# Paralyzed trooper's baptism 'inspiration'

PRYOR, Okla. (BP) — Jeanette Smith and her stepson, 16 year-old Blake, stood on opposite sides of the baptistry at First Church, Pryor, Okla.

Water dripped from their white baptismal robes as they watched their husband and father being lowered into the water by five burly men, as he followed his family in a public profession of his faith in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Wendell Lang awaited below as Steve Smith, in his wheelchair, was lowered into the water by fellow Oklahoma Highway Patrol (OHP) troopers Ted Hollingsworth, Wayne Carman, Scott Horton, and Branson Perry, assisted by Smith's close friend Larry Williams.

The baptismal pool was almost a lifetime away from the pool of blood in where Smith had lain on April 25, 1999, after a bullet from a .357 magnum revolver blasted into the right side of his neck as he wrestled with a suspect who already had killed his wife and was threatening to end his own life as well.

Smith's baptism is an affirmation that the former OHP trooper believes despite his limitations that God is going to use him, and in a mighty way.

"God has big things in store for me," Smith said. "I don't know what it is yet, but he has a great plan."

Smith, 39, was saved at the First Assembly of God Church in Muskogee, Okla., when he was a teenager, but had not been baptized. Jeanette also was a member of the Assembly of God Church and attended a church in Salina, Okla., about 10 miles east of Pryor.

Meanwhile, Blake and Jeanette's son from a previous marriage, Christopher, 14, attended First Church, Pryor.

"We just weren't together," Jeanette confessed. "We were experiencing all sorts of problems, and it was tearing our family apart."



NEW MAN IN CHRIST — Steve Smith, in his wheelchair, is helped out of the baptistry by friends at First Church, Pryor, Okla., after being baptized by pastor Wendell Lang (far right). (BP photo)

Finally, the family sat down and prayed for direction. They were led to attend First Church, Pryor — together.

"We knew the first time we went, we had found a home," Smith said. "After we prayed about it some more, we decided to make it our church home."

Having never been baptized, Steve and Jeanette visited with Lang, and revealed their desire to do so.

"Steve's desire to be baptized should be an inspiration to us all," Lang said. "Spiritually, it serves as a point of identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At the same time, it's very significant because of Steve's limitations."

"The fact that he was baptized while in his wheelchair is a salient point that God meets us wherever we are."

On that dark day in April 1999, all indications pointed to the fact that Steve Smith's life was over. At 6-4, 245 pounds, Smith was a veteran highway patrolman who was well-

known in Northeast Oklahoma for his countless hours of presenting drug and alcohol awareness programs to school children in the area.

That longest day of Steve Smith's life found him in a cemetery near Bernice, Okla., as the murder suspect held about 40 peace officers at bay that evening.

Smith and Delaware County Sheriff Jim Earp tried for more than an hour to get the man to give up his weapon. When the man finally put his weapon down on a bench, the officers rushed him in an attempt to end the standoff and Smith was shot in the ensuing struggle.

Earp received a wound to the arm, while the suspect died.

After being wounded, Smith was rushed to a Miami hospital, then air-lifted to St. John Medical Center in Joplin, Mo.

While racing north on the Will Rogers Turnpike between Vinita and Miami, paramedics were forced to stop and give Smith a transfusion of blood in order for him to survive the ride.

"The only reason Steve is still here is because God wanted

him on this Earth," said Williams, whose first personal encounter with Smith came when Williams' 15-year-old daughter, Georgianna, was seriously injured in an automobile accident.

To help offset some of the family's medical expenses, Hollingsworth organized a "sticker" campaign.

The windshield stickers, bearing Smith's badge number 725, were sold to Mayes County residents for a minimum \$2 donation.

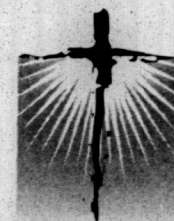
"Steve and Jeanette are attending my Sunday School class, and I think that's one way they became comfortable with our church," revealed Williams, who noted that Smith's baptism was carried out by several of his friends carrying his wheelchair only a week after the Sunday School lesson was about the four men who lowered their paralytic friend down through the roof to see Jesus and be healed in Mark 2:1-12.

"As Jesus healed that paralyzed man, I think God is going to use Steve mightily in the future," Williams said. "In fact, there have been a myriad of indications I have seen already that God's hand of protection is on Steve, and he has brought him through this ordeal for a purpose."

## Record

Jeanette credits the power of prayer for bringing her husband through his test. "I deeply appreciate all the prayers and support from our community," she said recently. "More than once, I believe that the power of the prayers for Steve were what got him through some really terrible medical problems."

"We'll never forget the love shown to us by so many people," she said.



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## Sudan issue at forefront

WASHINGTON (BP) — Voices inside and outside Congress are calling for the United States government to intensify its efforts to end the civil war and religious persecution in Sudan. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and House of Representatives Majority Leader Dick Army recently called separately for the federal government to mount a strengthened campaign to pressure the militant Islamic regime in Khartoum to alter its policies.

The 16-year civil war in the east African country has resulted in about two million deaths and the displacement of more than four million people. The Islamic regime's campaign of terror, which includes slave raids and the bombing of hospitals, has primarily been aimed at Christian and animist villages in central and southern Sudan.

"Ending the war in Sudan should be a focus of U.S. foreign policy," Arney said in a March 22 news conference, according to a release from the majority leader's office. Arney is a Republican from Texas. "The movement to make it so has now reached critical mass. It is time for Sudan to move from lip-service attention to national priority."

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Don Stanfill, director of missions for Lafayette and Marshall associations, reports there were 270 professions of faith, representing 64 churches in 17 denominations at a recent Jay Strack crusade held in north Mississippi.

### 20 years ago

Sidney Smith, an African-American serving as ethnic liaison consultant for the Baptist Sunday School Board, reports that African-American Southern Baptists are the largest ethnic constituency in the convention, with churches recording almost 275,000 African-American members.

### 50 years ago

Temple Church is organized at Petal on April 1, with O. R. Mosely preaching the first sermon that night. Since the church's organization, there have been 29 additions to the church — eight by baptism.



# So. Baptist membership hits record mark

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Membership in Southern Baptist churches continued to climb toward the 16 million mark in 2000, with an increase of 108,552 bringing the total number of members to an all-time high of 15,960,308.

While the increase of 0.68% was less than the 0.78% gain of 122,400 members in 1999, the 2000 total surpasses the previous all-time high of 15,891,514 members reported in 1997, according to figures from the Annual Church profile (ACP).

The ACP is compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention from church reports routed through local Baptist associations and state conventions.

Total baptisms surpassed 400,000 for the fourth consecutive year, although the 2000 total of 414,657 entailed 4,685 fewer, or 1.12% less than the growth in 1999.

Sunday School enrollment increased by 38,958 or 0.48% in 2000 to a total of 8,186,415, following a 0.01% decrease in 1999.

Increases in Discipleship Training and men/boys mission education enrollment were significant, due in part to an increased number of state conventions reporting in these categories.

Discipleship gained 232,118 participants, an 11.75% increase, for a total of 2,208,427. Men/boys mission education gained 9.52% or 42,353 for a total of 487,410.

Other increases were reported in total tithes and offerings and special gifts: \$7,793,931,050, a 7.37% increase compared to the 1999 increase of 5.38%. Of that amount, undesignated receipts totaled \$5,980,939,876, an increase of 6.67%. Total receipts were \$8,437,177,940, an 8.55% increase.

Sunday morning average worship attendance increased 2.33% from 5,418,348 in 1999 to 5,544,439 in 2000.

Music ministry enrollment/participation declined by 12,072 or 0.72% to a total of 1,654,877.

Woman's Missionary Union enrollment declined by 17,370 or 1.91% to 892,157.

Totals in two other categories — value

of church property and church-type missions operated by churches — were affected by changes in the numbers of state conventions providing data.

Church property value declined by 7.24% to \$25,201,554,006. Church-type missions increased by 39.55% to 5,243.

## Love in Action Conference set for May 18-19

A Love in Action conference, offering help and hope through the power of Jesus Christ to family and friends of homosexual loved ones, will be held at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, on May 18-19.

The conference will include testimonies as well as studies on the biblical view of sexuality, causes of homosexuality, and communications tools to speak openly and honestly about homosexuality. Conference leaders will include Linda and John Cude, whose son died of AIDS; Heather Lesley, whose husband left her and their four daughters for a homosexual lifestyle; K.C. Winters, who recently shared his story of recovery from homosexuality on the ABC television network's 20/20 news-magazine; and Nathan Bell, a counselor, whose father lives the homosexual lifestyle.

There is no fee for the conference, and registration is limited to 50 participants. To receive a registration form or for more information, contact Jennifer Janes, Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton, MS 39056. Telephone: (601) 924-5260.

### LIFE IN PERSPECTIVE

The master teacher, our Lord Jesus, helped us to understand what life is by explaining what it is *not*. He said, "Life consisteth not of the abundance of things which a person possesses."

In our "I want, gimme, self-centered, greedy" world, we often can only understand life by what we would have if we could have more — more money, more cars, more trinkets, more gadgets, more high-tech doodads. Jesus says you need to look, evaluate, and put life in perspective and realize that it is not all those things.

A couple of years ago Cindy Brennan hit the jackpot. Everything about life was going right for her, she thought. She was newly married to a man she deeply loved, and the two of them made a trip to Las Vegas where she hit the jackpot, winning \$35 million dollars! Now, happily married and wealthy, could life be any better?

Three weeks after she won the pile of money, tragedy struck Cindy Brennan. She and her sister were involved in a terrible car accident caused by a drunk driver. On that day Cindy lost her sister, who she was so close to, and also lost the use of her arms and legs, as well as almost losing her life.

Today Cindy is a wealthy quadriplegic who cannot walk, comb her own hair, brush her



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

own teeth, or feed herself. The drunk who was driving the other car was charged, found guilty, and is now serving 92 years in prison for the death and the accident.

Cindy spends most of her life in a wheel chair struggling to function and grieving over her losses. To use a popular phrase of today, "Who wants to be a millionaire?" 35 times over if you cannot walk, function, or enjoy life?

What happened to Cindy Brennan can happen to any one of us. These strange set of circumstances serve to remind us that life is not *stuff*! It reminds us that in many significant ways life is health, not wealth!

Do you suppose Cindy would give \$35 million dollars to walk again? Do you suppose that if it were possible she would give that and more just to be able to use her arms and hands as she once did?

I think about so many of us who enjoy so much good health, so many dimensions of God's good provisions that

allow us to enjoy coming and going, working and playing, and then we turn and grumble and grouse about small and insignificant matters.

How long has it been since you have paused to thank God thoughtfully and in-depth for his gracious outpouring of good health to you?

We are reminded, also, of the fact that life is relationships and not riches. Cindy and her sister were close. They were not only sisters by birth, but their souls were knit together as friends — the kind of friend that you cannot replace and the kind of friend that is worth more than \$35 million dollars!

Jesus told that riveting account of a man who lived his life surrounded by opulence — good food, fine clothes, life as he wanted it, yet then died and lifted up his eyes in Hell!

Suddenly, all the things that seemed to be significant in life were not even considerations and the things that he apparently had ignored — like his five brothers — became important.

Jesus spent a lifetime demonstrating to us how important it is to build right relationships. Family, friends, co-workers, church members — there are folks all around who can not only bless you, but to whom you can be a blessing.

The final thought about this situation that helps put life in perspective is that life is not gold but God!

For the Christian, we know that whatever happens, whatever or whoever we may lose, the Lord will sustain us and stay with us. We know that loved ones in Christ, we will meet again. Losses of things — jobs, dreams, and even promises — whatever may be lost, broken, or unattainable, does not mean the end of the world or the annihilation of hope that we have in God!

If I could share with Cindy Brennan one glorious truth, it would be the same thing that I would tell you — that regardless of the circumstances of life, in Jesus Christ, God's Savior and Provider, we have the possibility of life abundant! It is amazing that so many spend a lifetime expending energy and pointless effort to gain and attain what means nothing, while ignoring the one who means everything.

Today, make *God* your goal instead of *gold* being your goal!



# NAMB releases 'Missions Education 101'

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — An unprecedented package of resources from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) is designed to help churches equip and mobilize every member in fulfilling Christ's Great Commission.

"It's Mission Education 101 in my view," Tim Seanor, NAMB's director of mission education, said of the comprehensive resources available in the recently introduced On Mission Church Planning Kit.

It is based largely on Christ's message to the early disciples in Acts 1:8 that they "will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

"Instead of missions promotion or advertising, what we're trying to do is introduce the concept of each Christian having a missionary responsibility, and each Christian becoming skilled as an effective on-mission Christian," Seanor said.

"If we can get that point across, then what we'll have is 40,000 mission strategy centers in our churches instead of

two mission boards that do it all," he said, "and we'll have millions of missionaries, meaning the laypeople, and not just the 10,000 North American and international missionaries."

The On Mission Church Complete Planning Kit is an undated resource that essentially helps churches fine-tune their entire approach to missions and ministry. It also was used as the basis for the 2001 North American Missions Study.

The kit includes a variety of resources for both group study and for use by church leaders in shaping the church's direction.

The age-graded studies include: for children, Acts 1:8 Kids; for youth, Purpose-Filled, Mission-Skilled; and for adults, My Purpose, His Plan: Sharpening Your Skills for His Mission. Each study includes a teaching guide, at least one student workbook (more for the children), a supporting videotape and promotional materials. Formats are included for presenting the material over 90 minutes, three hours, or 13 weeks.

The primary church-wide component is The On Mission Church Planning Resource, a loose-leaf binder containing comprehensive materials for pastors and key church leaders on integrating on-mission principles in such areas as worship, missions and mobilization, education and discipleship, outreach and fellowship, church-wide ministries, children and youth.

Also included are the On Mission Church Weekend Manual, designed for study of the materials in a weekend conference setting and The On Mission Team Manual — a guide for structuring an effective leadership team for coordinating "on-mission" principles throughout the church.

The mission skills covered in the materials include such concepts as understanding the mission, praying effectively, understanding the group being reached, developing relationships, planning a strategy, getting training, networking with other Christians and sharing the message.

In re-framing the context of mission education, Seanor said the focus turns from the

mission agencies to individual churches and Christians.

"The idea is that the mission boards would become partners to expand your church's participation in missions. Instead of totally relying on the boards to do mission, churches are asking the mission boards to help expand their mission," he said.

The new approach also allows individuals to take more of the initiative in mission strategy, rather than waiting on leadership to conceive and promote a particular effort.

"If you have these skills, you don't have to wait on the leader. All you have to do is look for the mission opportunities," Seanor said.

The On Mission Church resources are only the first in a series of materials to be offered to churches with a similar approach, Seanor said, beginning later this year with a follow-up resource focusing on lay church planting.

The On Mission Church Complete Planning Kit is available through LifeWay Christian Resources at (800) 448-8032 or through LifeWay Christian Stores.

Summer GA camp (June 4-July 27), staff GA Mother/Daughter Overnight June 22-23. For an application, call Robin Keels at (601) 292-3322 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 322. Nurses are also needed to staff each week of Summer GA camp at Camp Garaywa in Clinton from June 4-July 23. Interested persons should contact Keels at the above telephone numbers.



For more information on the On Mission Church Planning Kit, call (800) 448-8032 or visit our Web site at <http://www.lifeway.com>.

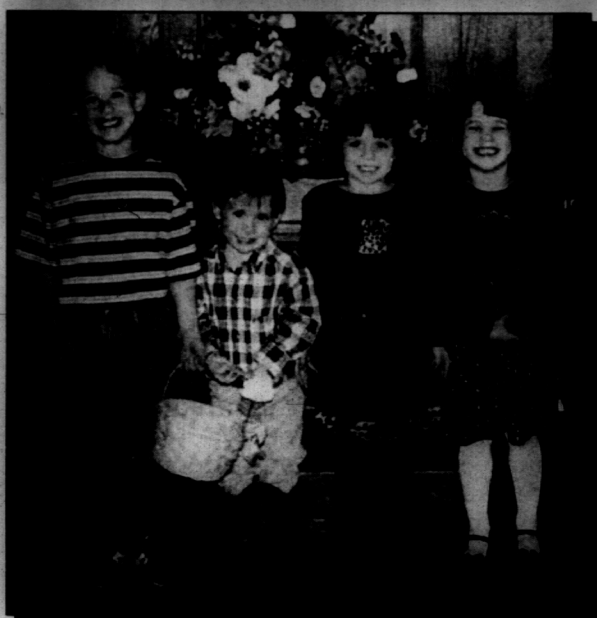




## Revivals

**Oral, Hattiesburg:** May 20-23; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Carless Evans, Bailey, evangelist; Bob Barger, Laurel, music; Jerry Jones, pastor.

**Longview (Pontotoc):** May 6-9; 7 p.m.; Riley "Chili" Graham, evangelist; different music group each night; Saturday, May 5, youth rally, Pontotoc Court Square; 7-10 p.m.; Dean Johnson and 3:16 providing music; Kevin Morrow, youth minister.



Children of New Harmony Church, Neshoba County

The children of New Harmony Church, Neshoba County, used an Easter basket to collect money for the Annie Armstrong Offering. Pictured (from left) are Kory Gentry, Wyatt McCann, Kaylee McCann, and Krissie Gentry.

**Antioch Church, Columbus,** will host a gospel concert featuring Johnny Parrack, formerly with the Gold City Quartet, May 19 at 7 p.m.

Revival services, led by Parrack, will be held May 20-23. Sunday services are 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; weekday services at 7 p.m.

**Macedonia Church, Petal,** will hold dedication services for a multipurpose building, May 20-23. Services will be held on Sunday at 10 a.m., covered dish meal at noon; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Guest speakers include Larry Kennedy, William Carey College, Sunday morning; Jerry Doggett, pastor, Poplar Springs, Mendenhall, Monday; Buddy Keyes, pastor, First Church, Richton, Tuesday; and L. H. McCollough, interim pastor, Sunrise Church, Petal, Wednesday. Nelson Crozier is pastor. For additional information, call the church at (601) 545-3110.



**GAs of First Church, Coldwater,** collected \$1,025 in Jingle Jars for the Lottie Moon Missions Offering. Pictured (from left, front row) are Kelsey Bell, Danielle Cain, Kacey Johnson, Kara Benson; (back row) Kaitlin Bell, Alysca Burris, Katherine Loftiss, Kelsie Shifflett, Megann McElhaney, Rachel Crenshaw, and Laura Long.



GAs of Lorena Church, Smith County, (pictured, front row) are Stacy Henderson, Emily Forfer, Nicole Faulkner; (back row) Helen Faulkner, Shana Bishop, Carrie Harrison, and Sharon Taylor, teacher.

Pews, pulpits, baptistries, stained glass, carpet, steeples, lighting, folding doors, theater seats.

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## JUST FOR THE RECORD



Youth and adults of First Church, Coldwater

Youth and adults from First Church, Coldwater, went on a mission trip to Jamaica during spring break. The team built pews for Mt. Carmel Church, led Backyard Bible Clubs and worship services, passed out over 1,000 Bibles, ministered in a local home for girls, and did one-on-one evangelism. Pictured (from left, front row) Shirley Ferguson, Jessica Johnson, Jessica Crenshaw, Andrea Slocum, Jill Emerson; (second row) Gloria Irwin, Rod Irwin, Bernice Burns, Serita Johnson, Felix McElhaney, Jacqueline Poe, David Slocum, Jenny Wilson, Sandy Slocum; (third row) Daniel Spears, Bankston Johnson, Scot Jones, Curt Taylor, Ryan Crenshaw, Kaylee and Wyatt McCann and Will Todd.

**Memorial Day services** will be held at Mashulaville Church, Macon, May 6 at 11 a.m. The speaker will be George Dye.

**Indian Springs Church, Jones County,** will celebrate its 147th anniversary on homecoming Sunday, May 6. Activities include Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall; and 6:30 p.m. Steve Mesarch, a messianic Jew, will share during the evening service about his ministry of building a bridge of love between Jews and Christians. Mike West is pastor. For additional information, call (601) 428-1279.



Kaylee and Wyatt McCann of New Harmony Church, Neshoba County, are pictured holding the Christmas stocking that was passed each Sunday for the Lottie Moon Offering.

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For references and more information, call Mike Brooks at 601-353-2400 or 1-800-442-0290.

**Wellington Associates, Inc.**



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 3, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## Midwest Women's Conference

Jefferson City, Missouri  
August 16-18

Registration Deadline: July 10  
Cost: \$235 per person

**A WMU regional training event, featuring:**  
**Wanda Lee, executive director, WMU, SBC**  
**Esther Burroughs, noted author & speaker**  
**Gwen Williams, worship leader**  
**Missionaries**  
**Nine Conference Sessions**

### Midwest Conference Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_  
Church: \_\_\_\_\_  
Association: \_\_\_\_\_

- Package includes transportation, 4 nights lodging, program fee and conference meals. (Travel meals are on your own.)
- Total cost due at registration. Deadline to register, July 10.
- Substitutions may be made at any time. No refunds after July 24.
- Make checks payable to MBCB (designate for Windermere Women's Conference) and mail with registration form to Mississippi WMU, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.
- Contact Miss. WMU office for more information, in Jackson, 292-3316, or 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail: tanderson@mbcb.org.

Travel Schedule: Depart from Garaywa, Aug. 15; Conference, Aug. 16-17; Depart from Windermere, spend night in route to Mississippi, Aug. 18; Arrive at Garaywa, Aug. 19.

## One Voice

First Baptist Church, Newton  
May 6, 2001, 7 p.m.

## 2001 Family Week

### Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, July 2-6, 2001

#### Conferences:

- Preschool / Children's TeamKIDS
- Mini-Centrifuge with Mickey and Alice Little, Mobile
- Couples - Ronnie and Beverly Cottingham, Lucedale
- Single Parenting James Hayes, FBC, Biloxi
- Transformational Hearts Eugene Dobbs, Philadelphia, Miss.

#### Special Events

- BBQ cookout
- Whole "free" day
- Crafts, clowning workshops
- Ice cream and watermelon fellowship
- Night swimming

#### Special Guests:

- His Praise Ensemble, Vicksburg
- Hilton Family Singers
- Joseph Harris, magician



Hilton Family Singers

*For every three paying families, spouse of church or association leader gets in free*

For more information contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department  
1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800

#### Registration For Family Week

Name of Adults \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Children's names/birthdays \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Association \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571  
(Visa and MasterCard are accepted.) For more info call 228-452-7261. Make checks payable to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly. (Note: no skateboards or roller-blades)

Deposit: \$40 per person or \$80 per family  
COST PER PERSON - ROOM/MEALS/RESERVATIONS

"A" Unit	"C" Unit
Adults (12 years and up) .....\$165.40 each	Adults (12 years and up) ..\$150.20 each
Child (2-11 years old).....\$82.45 each	Child (2-11 years old).....\$80.50 each
Under 2 years old.....\$4.00 each	Under 2 years old .....\$46.25 each

## 2001 State Singles Retreat at Gulfshore

"The Power of a Transformational Single"

Alan Correy

May 26-28

Renee Schidt

- Men's Conferences with Alan Correy
- Women's Conferences with Renee Schidt

- Hawaiian Luau with steel drum band, Holmes Community College
- Celebration Services • Ice Cream Fellowship • Seafood Banquet
- "Walking Faithfully" with Gwen Williams, Miss Chocolate, New Orleans



- T-Shirt for early registration (\$40 deposit by May 1)
- Sunday options include Jazzland (\$20 by May 1), New Orleans, Seamen's Ministry, Swamp Tour
- Sunday Night Concert featuring *The Naturals* from Mississippi College  
Cost \$90.45 (2 person room) or \$82.45 (2-4 per room)  
For reservations, call Gulfshore Baptist Assembly: 1-228-452-7261

Call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Dept. for info: 601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651





Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



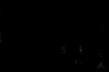
Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith





# SUMMER MISSIOINARIES

2001



Mr. A. J. Smith

Mr. A. J. Smith

Mr. A. J. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith



Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith

Mr. J. H. Smith



# Pray this day for...

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

## May 4-17, 2001

### PRAYER IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR LIVES.

We pray about the everyday concerns as well as the major life decisions. We pray long term, and we pray for immediate needs. We pray at regular times, and we pray on the spur of the moment.

Jim Clontz, Baptist Adults, Spring 2001

For: (1) Christian Home Week (Discipleship & Family Ministry Emphasis); (2) Although most people still do not read the Bible during the week, the slow but steady increase in the proportion of people who do so is also hopeful. Pray that more parents will begin daily family devotions.

Mother's Day is set apart every year in honor of motherhood. It received national recognition on May 8, 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson signed a joint resolution of Congress recommending that the government observe Mother's Day. Today, pray especially for all mothers.

For: (1) Sunday School Directors' Lab; FBC, Booneville (SS); (2) Student ministry in Nairobi, Kenya, a city of over 3 million people. Two deans of students at two different colleges are asking the Parklands Baptist Church to establish a Student Ministry Board with a full-time staff person. Pray that they will.

For: (1) Sunday School Directors' Lab; FBC, Columbia (SS); (2) I Senior Adult Conference; Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM); (3) Chung Le of Colorado Springs, Colo., is a church planter pastor at the small Vietnamese Baptist church. Pray for the ministries of the church and for growth numerically and spiritually.

For: (1) Senior Adult Choir Festival; Morrison Heights BC, Clinton (Church Music); (2) Madagascar, one of the largest islands in the world currently has no IMB missionaries. Pray for a survey team which is trying to identify the obscure people groups. Pray that God will send laborers.

For: (1) Associational Leadership Conference; Ridgecrest BC, Madison (MSNXT); (2) "Crossover" is held each year before the SBC's annual meeting. It includes prayer, door-to-door canvassing, street witnessing, sports evangelism, and block parties. Pray for Crossover in New Orleans, June 8-10.

Baptist Building AT HOME DAYS 9th - 11th; (2) Flooding has affected more than 250,000 people in Malawi. Please pray for missionary John Brown and Baptists as they seek to determine how to best participate in assistance to flood victims and share the gospel with the hopeless.

The Thuringen Team in Germany rejoices that after a man from a Last Frontier nation received a copy of the "Jesus" film and a New Testament in his mother tongue, he showed it to other people from his country. One of them liked the film so much, that he took it back to his home country to show.

Missionaries serving on the Andean Agriculture Team in Venezuela requests your prayers for two new cell groups. Pray for D., who recently accepted Christ at an agricultural conference. His wife accepted Christ at the cell group meeting in their home. Pray for both cell groups.

For: (1) II Senior Adult Conference; Gulfshore Assembly, 17th - 19th (D&FM); (2) Recently, a religious teacher in Niger contacted one of our personnel to learn about Christianity. Pray for our worker as he shares the gospel message and discusses the Bible with him.

For: (1) Nehemiah Project; Baptist Building (Strategic Missions); (2) Witnessing through Media; Ridgecrest BC, Madison (DBS) Broadcast Services; (3) Pray for Church Planters - Missionaries who go to a location where it has been determined that a new church is needed.

Missionary Wesley Jones, Tajumulco Mam Team, Guatemala asks you to pray for the tiny church in Nuevo Porvenir, where the pastor has suffered great rejection. However, during the showing of the "Jesus" film, the church was packed out. Pray for the Holy Spirit's conviction in their hearts.

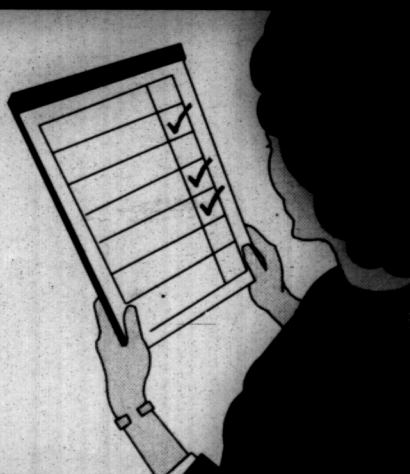
For: (1) Youth Bible Study; Outside the Walls; FBC, Gulfport (SS); (2) New Church Start Update; Panola Assn. Center; Batesville; (SM); (3) Carl Myers of Poplarville, MS, MSC volunteer leading construction teams to Iowa in May and to Romania in July.

In Peru missionaries Mike and Kathy Weaver work with the Rapid Entry and Advance Program. This is a method to reach the many "micro" indigenous people groups by seeking churches to adopt them, pray for the people and to send multiple volunteer teams to minister and share the gospel.

## WMU Age Level Training (ALT) Discover the joy of missions

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WMU age-level leadership

Friday, May 18, 4 p.m.  
until Saturday, May 22, 2:30 p.m.  
Camp Garaywa



### A.L.T. Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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3 \$43 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 \$38 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ number attending x \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (price each) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total enclosed

Send registration form & check to WMU, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.

## Mississippi Baptist Youth Night 2001

Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson  
Friday, July 27, 6:30-9:00 p.m.



Rick Ousley  
Speaker



Michael John  
Clement  
Worship Leader

#### GUIDELINES

- Encourage your youth to bring their unsaved and inactive friends.
- Encourage each person to bring a Bible.
- Appropriate dress is requested.
- No alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or illegal drugs will be permitted.
- No radios or taping equipment will be permitted.
- Counselor training will begin at 6:25 p.m.

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night's purpose is to provide the youth of Mississippi the opportunity to gather for a contemporary worship celebration led by creative communicators of the gospel resulting in edifying believers and reaching others for Christ.

Come  
Worship

Plan Now to Bring Your Church Youth Group

# HOUSE TOPS



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



GAs of First Church, Purvis

GAs, of First Church, Purvis, are pictured with 34 shoebox Easter baskets that they wrapped, decorated, and filled for delivery to the Christian Services Center in Hattiesburg. Stephanie Stuart is the GA director.

Death, loss, and grief weekend workshop will be held May 11-12 at Central Church, Meridian. Registration will be 6:15-7 p.m. on Friday with session 1, 7-9 p.m. Activities on Saturday are 8:30-10:30 a.m., session 2; and 10:30-11:30 a.m., session 3. The workshop will be led by Jeanine C. Bozeman, professor of social work, New Orleans Seminary. For additional information, call (601) 693-4288.

Emmanuel Church, Grenada, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on May 13 at 2:30 p.m. "We have planned a special service looking over the

past 50 years of history, thanking God for the present, and by faith looking into the future," said Clarence Cooper, pastor.

The combined choirs of Central Church and Carmel Church, Meridian, will present God for Us at Central Church, May 6 at 6:30 p.m. For additional information, call (601) 693-4288.

Mission Friends of Monument Drive Church, Tupelo, were recently recognized during the morning worship service. Pictured (from left, back row) are Tori Comstock; Caleb Russell; Kelly Russell; Ashley Pulse; (front row) Florence Francis, co-director; Austin Reeder; Rebecca Tackett; Brandon Smith; Anna Brooks; and Mary Lee Tackett, co-director. Not pictured are



Mission Friends of Monument Drive Church, Tupelo

Analyse Long and Peyton Dyer.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS



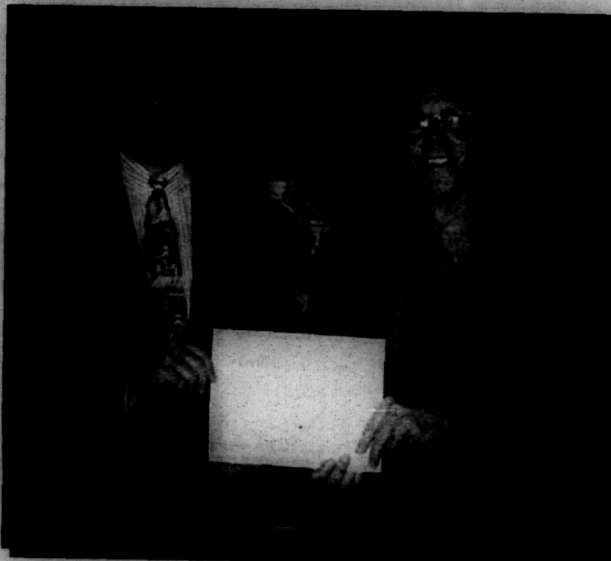
Ellingburg, Turner, and Jones

Dennis Edward Ellingburg

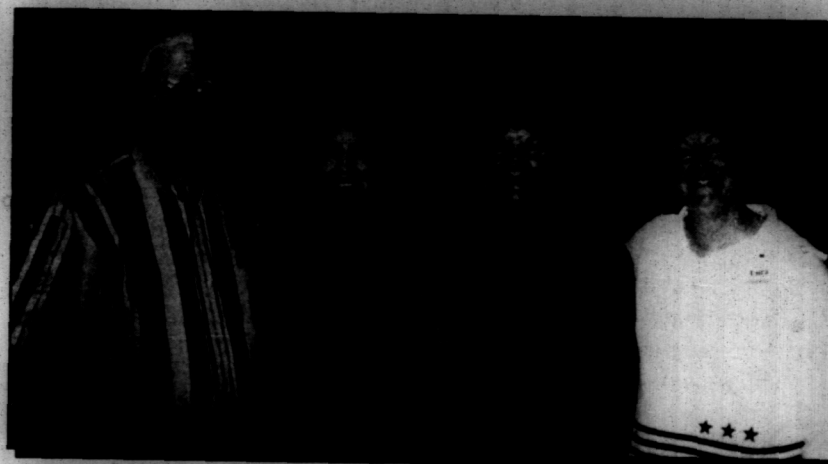
was ordained to the ministry on Feb. 18 at Leesburg Church, Morton. He is presently youth minister at First Church, Morton. Pictured with Ellingburg are Joe Turner, pastor, First Church; and Jeff Jones, associate pastor, Leesburg Church.

Delta Association. Pictured are John Sheppard, Abernathy, Pennington, and Lura Sheppard, director for Alternative for Life with NAMB.

Tommy Jenkins was recently licensed to the ministry at Oakland Heights Church, Meridian. Pictured (from left) are Jenkins and Mike Russell, pastor.



Jenkins and Russell



J. Sheppard, Abernathy, Pennington, and L. Sheppard

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

## Homecoming

Sardis (Cotiah): May 6; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; and afternoon song service; Robert Sanders of Quitman, guest speaker; David and Joyce [unclear] of Pearl Valley, and [unclear]

## THE LORD'S MONEY

Editor:

My wife and I were watching the local television news when a story caught our attention. A local church was the center of controversy because a few members were mad about a decision the church had made. These people wanted their \$1,000 gift to be returned to them. I have a few thoughts I would like to share.

First, I feel strongly that a church is autonomous. Whatever a church decides to do is its own concern. I cannot see where this church violated Scripture when they decided to change its name.

Secondly, I am grieved that these people who are upset would go to the local news to air their anger at this church. While they are openly tearing down this church and its pastor, a lost world is watching.

Where was Christ in this? Where was his mission? I saw damage being done to the Bride of Christ on secular television, and this grieved my heart.

Lastly, I wonder to whom the gift of money was given. Was it given to an organization or was it given to the Lord?

My wife and I feel so strongly about this that we are giving a gift to this church. It's the Lord's money in the first place, not mine. I would encourage others to do so as well.

I had never had a conversation with the pastor until after the news story. I'm convinced that he and the church are trying their best to reach that community for Christ.

Johnny Beaver, pastor  
Pilgrims Rest Church  
Crystal Springs

## THANKS FOR LETTER

Editor:

I would like to add to the letter, Shouldn't Get Rich, in April 12 edition. I am in full agreement that if there is nothing wrong in the amount of salary received it would be published without discussion. Only things that aren't seen to be correct are hidden.

Also, this letter brought to my mind a Scripture: "To whom much is given, much is required." Our denomination is the richest in the world. Last year a list of investments of the International Mission Board was published with dollar value upward of \$248 million.

My prayer and desire for Southern Baptists is that we would humble ourselves before God before it is too late. By too late, I mean the Lord is coming again. It's still true, once saved always saved. We can still pray directly to God even if the present Baptist Faith and Message says otherwise.

Yes we will have to answer for our terrible blunders. Thanks Pastor Brady for your letter. Good to know we still have some pastors willing to stand up and be counted even when it isn't the popular thing to do.

Lou Carroll  
Gulfport

## GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT

Editor:

I would like for you to go back in your mind and recall when you were fourteen years of age and try to remember the issues that were of greatest importance to you at that time. In comparison, consider your life today. Career, finances, family obligations, deadlines, etc. and all the day to day stresses these aspects involve.

So what is my point here? In the world of the fourteen-

year-old, desperately juggling puberty, peer pressure, social acceptance, academic achievement, and parental expectations, the anxiety and stress is just as overwhelming to him/her as it is for the single parent struggling to hold a job, raise children, and pay the bills.

The frustrated young boy in the back row, who consistently makes poor grades, eventually gives up and the frustration turns to anger.

The awkward young girl whom no one notices, or the overweight child everyone humiliates, cry themselves to sleep each night in despair.

The child who appears to have everything he could want commits suicide because no one bothered to listen.

Now the recurrent sound of gunfire is shattering the silence. I do not believe it is an issue of race or financial status.

The child growing up in abject poverty needs to know he is of value and loved for who he is just as the child who has all his material needs met-not for what they can achieve, but because they are each wonderfully unique with individual tal-

continued on page 9

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Mississippi College chapter of Mortar Board inducted 48 new members into its ranks during a special ceremony held recently on campus. Mortar Board is a senior honor society dedicated to the principles of scholarship, leadership, fellowship, college loyalty, self-awareness, and service. Inducted were Missy Bagwell, Nicholas Belk, Melissa Bellah, Jonathan Berry, Victor Black, Brian Blackwell, Betsy Boerner, Jonathan Bradshaw, Elizabeth Burkhead, ReeRee Byron, Lauren Chow, Carrie Cutrer, Roy Dabbs, Jr., April DeMoss, David Dykes, Joy Fain, Brandon Fortinberry, Amy Fountain, Marjo Gill, Joshua Grissom, Karen Hand, Melissa Harms, Abe Hodges, Kyle Hunt, Kathryn Keen, Meghan Kennedy, Travis Lee, Sandra Noyes, Laurin Parks, Elizabeth Patten, Katherine Patten, Brooks Poole, Mandy Prevost, Mary Pritchett, Priscilla Pulliam, Wesley Quick, Anne Ranson, Rebekah Ray, Janalee Shadburn, Carla Simpson, Amy C. Smith, Katy Thompson, Elizabeth

Travers, Peggy Walker, William Waller, Collin Ware, Hart Wylie, and Andy Yarborough.

Mississippi College (MC) will hold its spring graduation ceremonies on Saturday, May 12 at 10 a.m. in Robinson-Hale Stadium. Approximately 560 students are expected to graduate from the school. The Honorable Thad Cochran, United States Senator from Mississippi, will be the commencement speaker. The MC School of Nursing will hold its Pinning Ceremony on Friday, May 11 at 11 a.m. in Spell Auditorium of Provine Chapel. The School of Law will hold its Hooding Ceremony at 2 p.m. at First Church of Jackson.

The American Chemical Society held its annual SAACS awards banquet April 2 as part of the 221st American Chemical Society National Meeting and Exposition in San Diego, Calif. At the ceremony, attended by chemistry faculty and student representatives from four-year

colleges across the nation, the Mississippi College chapter was given the 2000 Outstanding Chapter Award. This award is given to a chapter based on the number of chemistry activities done during the previous year; community projects expressed in outreach demonstrations at area high schools; student participation in presenting research in regional and national chemistry meetings; the hosting of a

number of chemistry lectures on campus; and local involvement in National Chemistry Week activities. This award was one of 31 "Outstanding Chapter Awards" given by the national organization from the more than two thousand SAACS chapters nationwide. Accepting the award for the college was John Legg, emeritus professor of Chemistry, and immediate past chair of the department.

## ATTENTION VBS DIRECTORS & PASTORS

Lee Pitts Spooner & Nicky "God's Little Talking Tree" will be touring the Southeast USA on their 2001 VBS "Truth Trackers" Tour to tell Boys and Girls everywhere about the

"King of Truth" - Jesus Christ

To inquire about Lee & Nicky coming to your VBS - Call 334-660-7628

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TOP 100

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continued from page 8

ents, goals, hopes, and dreams.

Give a child encouragement, support, a firm foundation with strong roots based on unconditional love, and they will find their wings.

Michelle R. Evans  
Sontag

#### THANKS FOR ARTICLE

Editor:

Thank you for the great article of the students preparing for service. I have the article and picture of all the students last summer that was in the Record on my refrigerator door and I see them at my prayer time and all through the day. I met one of the young men at one of our retreats; he played the piano for us. I admire their courage and giving up summer pleasures to serve our Lord. But there is eternal value in their service.

I will be praying for these that are going this summer, and may the Lord use them in a great way.

Olga Simmons  
Myrtle

#### FOCUS ON JESUS

Editor:

I was raised a Southern Baptist, and believe in them. The shift towards conservatism in the Southern Baptist Convention is good news.

There are so many church groups who have departed the Christian Faith, and are wallowing in worldly filth.

Baptists everywhere need to take a stand against any appear-

ance of evil — it is not wise to join the ecumenical band wagon — but to be separate, and to come out amongst them in love, stay out of the world council and national council of churches.

Our focus should be on Jesus and his saving grace, soul winning, living holy and godly lives with hospitality. Churches should help the widows, and orphans as much as possible, Men and women should live these proper roles in life.

We need to take strong stands against homosexuality, abortion, pornography, Hollywood, Feminism, and Halloween. I think people should read their Bibles. I prefer the old King James Bible. Divorce and remarriage is plain wrong, and people should go by God's Word on that issue, as on every topic pertaining to godly living and sin.

I believe we are living in the very last days. As Baptist Christians, we all need to take a

stand against sin and worldliness. We need to return to old-fashioned living. Short pants, sweat pants, women wearing pants, immodest clothing — I think God is not pleased with that.

Lord blessing to everyone! How long has it been churches since you baptized in the rivers?

Michael Young  
Dillingham, Ak.

#### PRAISES FOR PRAY

Editor:

May I take this means to express grateful appreciation for the many valuable and worthwhile contributions of Dot Pray, keyboard consultant for the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Dot retired at the end of March after 25 years of faithful service.

During her tenure, she blazed new trails toward recognition of an area heretofore taken for granted. She elevated the level of appreciation for organists and pianists as leaders in worship.

As a musician par excellent, Dot Pray was a great encourager of excellence in musicianship and in the selection of appropriate music for preludes, offertories, and postludes which would honor our great God and bring him praise.

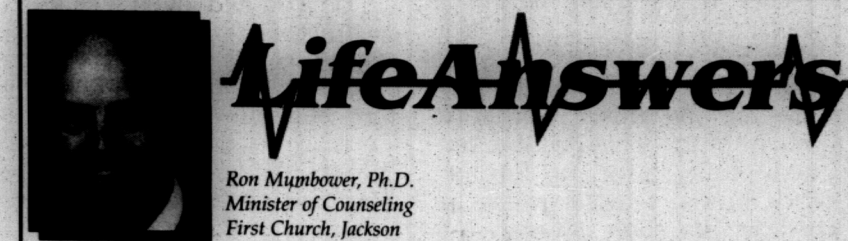
Dot Pray's influence has reached far beyond the borders of the state of Mississippi. She has had an impact on church keyboard music throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

Through the State Keyboard Festivals held each year, she has been a great encourager of young musicians, urging them to recognize their God-given talents and dedicate them to his service.

Dot Pray is a true friend to my family and me. It is now my privilege to serve as church organist and minister to senior adults at Dot's home church, First Church, McComb.

I believe that I echo the sentiments of many here at First Church, the McComb/Pike County area, and throughout our state when I say: Thank you, Dot, for a job well done. We are all better because you walked and served among us.

With Love and Grateful Appreciation,  
Ed Sudduth  
Organist and Minister to Senior Adults  
First Church, McComb



Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*How can I tell my grandparents I'm moving out? I love them but they are running my life and treating me like a child.*

You will always be a child to your grandparents, no matter how old you are. If you are an adult and responsible for yourself, moving out can be a positive action. Are you sure you are ready for all that responsibility? If you do move out, will it be permanent or will you be back frequently? Your grandparents may not know how to let go. Talk with them about your needs. This will take some time as are "retrained." Show appreciation and take it slow. Your grandparents are from a different era and live a different lifestyle. Make sure you are not burning bridges behind you. You may not realize it until you're out on your own, but you may need your grandparents' advice and help down the road. Remember that

they been there for you up to this point.

*I am considering cremation. Is there any reason, from a Christian point of view, why I cannot do this if I desire?*

I find nothing in Scripture that says cremation is wrong. If you need information on the procedure, talk with a someone who had made such arrangements. Deciding now is important, because it frees your loved ones to grieve appropriately without the burden of making such an important decision at a time when emotions are high. The family discussions can be a bonding and healing time for all the members of the family, as we learn to make the most of the present and give words of goodness to each other while we are alive — rather than saving all those kind words for a eulogy.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### FAITH clinic set for May 15-17

A FAITH Training Clinic will be held May 15-17 at Trinity Church, Southaven, sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. The clinic is for all church leaders who are interested in being trained in the FAITH Sunday School Evangelism Outreach Strategy. For more information, call the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3374, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 374. E-mail: [jclendinning@mbcb.org](mailto:jclendinning@mbcb.org).

For registration information, call LifeWay Christian Resources, FAITH Division, at (800) 254-2022.

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# FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

## Talking with God

Luke 11:1-13

By Lori Clendinning

Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father...'

A wise man was asked how one should pray. He said: "Just take a chair and put it opposite you and think to yourself that God is sitting on that chair. Then talk to him in the way that you would talk to your closest friend, your confidante, your beloved."

*'Hallowed be your name...'*

A missionary in China during World War II, Gladys Aylward was in charge of moving 100-plus children away from fast-advancing Japanese armies. At the edge of the Yellow River, Gladys could not find transportation across. A young girl asked her, "Why doesn't God open the Yellow River like he did the Red Sea for Moses?"

Gladys wearily answered, "That was a long time ago, and I'm not Moses."

The girl persisted, "Yes, but God is still God."

Gladys prayed again, imploring God to meet their need. Within moments, a Chinese Nationalist officer arrived and proceeded to whistle at the water's edge. Immediately, a boat appeared to take the children across to safety in relays.

God is still God!

*'Your kingdom come...'*

In his book "Prayers for Young People," William Barclay proposed that God has four answers to prayer: "Sometimes he says 'Yes.' Sometimes he says 'No.' Sometimes he says 'Wait.' Most of all he says 'If.'"

God says, 'I will help you IF



Clendinning

you will do everything you can to help yourself.' Prayer is not an excuse for being lazy and for pushing all the work off onto God: prayer is a way of finding the strength and ability to do things along with God that we could never have done by ourselves."

*'Give us each day our daily bread...'*

In the mid-1800s, George Muller had no money to provide for the thirty orphaned girls he and his wife had rescued from labor in English workhouses. One evening he read in his Bible, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Taking God at his word, Muller decided he would ask God for everything he needed for his orphans, without letting a soul know what was required. Then he would wait with patience for God to provide.

Time after time, George's prayers were answered and his faith was strengthened, whether it was food and clothing on the doorstep or workmen who

showed up unannounced to provide their services.

"If I can show that God can supply the needs of all my orphans," he wrote, "others will learn to trust their Father to supply their needs." From a small home for thirty girls, Muller's Homes in Bristol, England, grew to provide for 2,000 children.

*'Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us...'*

Corrie Ten Boom and her sister, Betsie, were sent to a German concentration camp during World War II because they had given refuge to Jews in Holland. Betsie died during internment and Corrie, later released, continued to serve God by traveling to share the message of God's love and forgiveness in Christ Jesus.

Following a church service, the former SS man who had been their guard at the Ravensbruck camp approached Corrie saying that Jesus had washed his sins away. She urgently prayed, "Lord Jesus, forgive me and help me to for-

give him. Give me Your forgiveness, for I cannot forgive him on my own."

Corrie took the man's hand and instantly felt an amazing current pass through her to him. Love filled her heart. She later wrote, "I discovered that when God tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself."

*'And lead us not into temptation...'*

A prolific writer, Oswald Chambers wrote much about prayer: "Prayer is often a temptation to bank on a miracle of God instead of on a moral issue; that is, it is much easier to ask God to do my work than it is to do it myself. Until we are disciplined properly, we will always be inclined to bank on God's miracles and refuse to do the moral thing ourselves. It is our job, and it will never be done unless we do it."

And Jesus says... pray!

Clendinning is a former newspaper editor and a member of Park Place Church, Pearl.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Threat

1 Samuel 18:1-20:42

By Jim Burnett

Have you heard the story about the flood victim who prayed for God to deliver him?

Immediately upon asking the Lord to rescue him from the rising waters in his house, there was a knock at his door. It was a fireman in waders ready to carry him to safety. The man refused the fireman's offer, however, saying, "God will come for me."

The water kept rising. Then in the distance he heard the sound of a motor boat. The rescue team pulled up outside his second story window and begged him to get aboard, but he refused saying, "God will come for me."

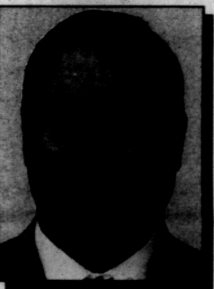
A couple of hours passed and the water rose to roof level. As the man stood atop his

roof, he heard the sound of a helicopter.

As it hovered over his house, the crew lowered a rope and harness and pleaded with the man to grab hold. He refused and shouted, "God will come for me."

The man drowned and immediately found himself in heaven where he asked Saint Peter why God did not come for him. Peter responded by saying, "God sent a fireman, a boat, and a helicopter."

God often provides help to his children through others. David is an example of this. Jonathan, his friend, Michal, his wife, and Samuel, his spiritual counselor, helped David escape Saul's murderous attempts on his life. God continues to use people today to



Burnett

meet the needs of his children.

**Deadly suspicion (18:8-9).** Saul's victory over Goliath and the Philistines was quickly soured when the people began applauding David as a warrior mightier than Saul. Immediately David was seen by the king as a threat to his throne.

But what was David's crime, and what was Saul's problem? David had simply obeyed God's will to fight and defeat Goliath. Israel praised him as a hero; Saul, however, viewed him as an enemy.

Have you ever found yourself in a similar position as David's? Perhaps you did exactly what God requested of you, but not everyone understood your actions. In fact, some may have wrongly charged you with having a hidden agenda or selfish motive. Often being obedient to God creates friction between those in God's will and those out of God's will.

**Timely helpers (19:11-12,**

**18).** Was Saul really serious about killing David? It appears so, because three times he hurled his spear at the agile David to no avail. Why was the king so intent on murdering this man? Saul's suspicion of David had now progressed into fear. The Spirit of God had left Saul and settled mightily upon David. Saul's rebellion against God was creating adverse effects. An evil spirit perplexed his spirit. Paranoia set in, and Saul became illogical.

David's life was in jeopardy. Several times he was just a few minutes from death, but God sent timely helpers to assist David and protect him from harm. Just in the nick of time, Michal, David's wife, and Saul's daughter, lowered David down through a window, saving him from her father's messengers. Then Samuel, the prophet and priest, led David from Ramah to Naioth to provide for his safety.

God's timing is always perfect and his provisions are always sufficient. When we are in need, God channels his

resources our way. Often these resources come in human form.

**Loyal supporter (20:12-13, 31-33, 42).** Jonathan took a huge risk in alerting David of his father's plans to kill him. From the day Jonathan watched David take down the giant with a sling and stone, a special relationship between these men developed. Consequently, Jonathan remained a loyal supporter of David until death.

All of us need "Jonathans" in our lives. We need people who will love us, protect us, fight for us, pray for us, and help us. I thank God I have family and friends who have stood in my corner and will continue to do so to support me.

I hope you have some God-sent people in your life who encourage you regularly. If not, ask the Lord to send some your way. And let me encourage you when God does send timely helpers, do not be like the flood victim who neglected to see God's provision through the rescuers.

Burnett is pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson.

# Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be confirmed by the message sender of an e-mail. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbc.org.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27  
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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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# Video takes in-depth look at Muslim faith

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — In a mosque in Southern California, a young man makes a vow that will profoundly change his life: "I declare that there is no God except Allah, and the prophet Muhammad is the messenger of God."

It is an authentic conversion to Islam, a ceremony similar in some respects to the Christian ordinance of baptism.

For the six million Muslims who now live in the United States and Canada, it is not a particularly unusual event — but for Christian audiences who witness the experience on a new video produced by the North American Mission Board (NAMB), it is a sobering reminder of the growing influence of Islam in a nation once considered a bastion of Christianity.

That personal perspective is a common theme of *The Cross or the Crescent: Understanding Islam*, a video-based study of the world's second-largest religion.

By examining Islam and its current practice in North America through the eyes of its followers, the agency hopes to create understanding and address popular misconceptions about Islam among Christians.

They also hope to equip Christians to relate more effectively with their Muslim neighbors when discussing their own deeply held beliefs.

"There is a realization that many Muslims have become our neighbors, and that only a few, especially in our Baptist churches, really know about Muslims," said Wolf Schumacher, producer, director, and writer of the video. "We don't really know what they believe, and that hinders us in communicating the Gospel to them."

The video is accompanied by a 53-page leader's manual with further resources on understanding Islam written by Samuel Shahid, a professor of missions at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Unlike many such efforts produced by Christians for Christians, *The Cross or the Crescent* hopes to ensure credibility by allowing the story of Islam to be told by those who know it best — prominent Islamic scholars and lay adherents to the faith.

The video then allows Christian scholars to clearly illustrate the critical theological points of divergence.

It is a method NAMB pioneered in the 1997 video, *The Mormon Puzzle*, which drew acclaim for its ability to reveal seldom-taught Mormon doctrines as explained by their own scholars.

"We felt like we had to look in-depth at Islam, and that led us to go to the eminent Islamic scholars in this country," said N.S.R.K. Ravi, an interfaith evangelism associate for

NAMB and content director for the video.

"We wanted them to explain their theological basis for God, man, sin, and salvation as taught in the Koran."

One popular misconception addressed throughout the video is the notion that the fundamentalist extremes associated with terrorism are in any way characteristic of the majority of Muslims.

"There is a terrorist element in their history, but that is not the overriding characteristic of these people," said Schumacher. "In fact, all the Muslims I've talked with have strongly condemned that kind of behavior."

To the contrary, Schumacher said he was struck by the "fantastic hospitality" and open doors that he received wherever he went.

"The idea is they would really love to keep corridors of communication open. They want people to see who they really are," he said.

"I think they have a strong desire that we understand them, that we don't see them as terrorists but as Americans and human beings who have very much in common with us."

While the video illustrates the history, practice, and basic theology of Islam in a manner that would not be disputed by most Muslims, the comparison of doctrines with Christianity does illustrate the sharp divisions.

Muslims do accept and revere Jesus Christ as a key figure, but it's not true, and that's what we wanted to point out. In order to do that you have to go to the source and let them explain it."

A key issue stressed throughout the video is that even the most devout followers of Islam and all of its tenets ultimately will be judged by a God who makes no promises in regard to the afterlife.

"Hearing from these eminent scholars mouths that they are not absolutely sure of salvation at the end of their lives, that presents some very good questions," Ravi said.

"For Islamic people, salvation is dependent on the mercy of God. Whereas in Christianity a person is assured of salvation by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior."

The video also examines a key aspect

of both Islam and Christianity that has drawn fire particularly toward evangelical Christianity in recent years: the mandate to communicate beliefs to others in hopes that they will accept them as their own.

In Christianity, it's known as evangelism. In Islam, the concept is known as Da'wah.

*Editor's note: For information on how to purchase *The Cross or The Crescent: Understanding Islam*, visit LifeWay Christian Stores or contact LifeWay Christian Resources at (800) 448-8032. An excerpt from the video's introduction is viewable on the Internet by visiting [http://www.namb.net/evangelism/iev/video\\_islam.asp](http://www.namb.net/evangelism/iev/video_islam.asp).*

## Bibliocipher

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YMI QTWI MFYM RFIJ  
GFWJ MNX MTQD FWR  
NS YMI JDIX TK FQQ YMI  
SFYNTSX; FSI FQQ YMI  
JSIX TK YMI JFWYM  
XMFQQ XJJ YMI  
XFQAFYNTS TK TZW LTI.

NXFNFM KNKYD-YBT:YJS

Clue: Q = L

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Exodus Fourteen: Thirteen.

## Teachings of Islam based on Koran

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The teachings of Islam are based on the Koran, which the Muslim prophet Muhammad claimed to have received from the angel Gabriel in his hometown of Mecca, Arabia, around 610 A.D.

While Islam respects the Bible, it does not accept the teachings of David, and the New Testament. Muslims believe they were given by Allah.

To Muslims, the Koran is the final revelation of Allah and is to be read and understood in Arabic.

Key teachings of Islam include:

- There is only one God, Allah.
- Muhammad is the last prophet of Allah.
- Muslims must pray five times a day.
- Muslims must give alms to the poor.
- Muslims must fast during the month of Ramadan.
- Muslims must perform the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime.